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**HB 248: To Prohibit Required Vaccination Status
Opponent Testimony: [NAME]
Ohio House Health Committee
June 15, 2021**

I appreciate the opportunity to provide opponent testimony on House Bill 248.

As a geriatrician, I care for an elderly population, and am also Medical Director of a CCRC with a long term/assisted living unit and many independent elders. I find your recent Vaccination stance AGAINST employers requiring vaccinations uninformed and misguided.

Yes, I support the right of individuals to decide about personal health matters, such as pregnancy termination and whether or not to get vaccinated against a deadly new pathogen. However, I also support our responsibility to care for those less fortunate or healthy. The extreme elderly and residents of long term care are most susceptible to the covid-19 virus, as evidenced by the numbers who have already died from it. Health care workers bear a responsibility to those they care for, especially for those workers caring for facility dwelling elders.

Many of the facility-related deaths from Covid were directly related to infected health care workers bringing the virus into the facility. Just as I have mandated that all workers able to get the flu vaccine must do so, we need to mandate the Covid vaccine. My nightmare is that an unvaccinated worker brings in Covid and CAUSES THE DEATH of a resident. Elderly patients are less likely to fully respond to the vaccine, and many have immune compromise, so they remain at risk despite being fully vaccinated.

I believe that any health care worker who chooses not to be vaccinated and causes illness or death of a resident should be charged with murder!!! Or face a civil liability suit for extreme damages brought by the family.

If you really believe every individual has the right to total autonomy, why do we have speed limits on the highway, why is driving drunk a crime? If someone wants the right to drive 90 miles an hour while intoxicated, they have the right to kill themselves on the highway, BUT NOT OTHERS. This is the same principle.

I am gravely concerned by this

Thank you for your consideration of my concerns, and once again, I urge the committee to reject HB 248 to keep Ohioans safe and avoid dangerous consequences for our state.

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